

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00  
DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 /054 W  
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R 071505Z MAR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9967  
INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN  
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY OSLO  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK  
AMEMBASSY ROME  
USMISSION USNATO

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E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PINT, SW  
SUBJECT: FLEDGLING COMMUNIST WORKERS' PARTY GROWS IN STRENGTH  
AS SWEDISH COMMUNISTS TAKE SIDES

REF: (A) STOCKHOLM 895, (B) STOCKHOLM 935

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. IN A DECISION WHICH GIVES THE NEW SWEDISH COMMUNIST WORKERS' PARTY (APK) A MAJOR BOOST IN ITS ATTEMPT TO BREAK WITH THE SWEDISH COMMUNIST PARTY (VPK), THE NORBOTTEN DISTRICT BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY MARCH 4 TO WITHDRAW FROM THE VPK, TAKING THE DISTRICT MEMBERSHIP LISTS AND TREASURY WITH IT. THE DEFECTION OF THE NORBOTTEN DISTRICT COULD IN ITSELF THROW ALMOST 10 PERCENT OF THE VPK MEMBERSHIP TO THE APK, THREATENING THE VPK'S POSITION IN THE 1979 ELECTIONS.

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2. DISTRICT CHAIRMAN ALF LOWENBORG, A MAJOR FIGURE IN THE PRO-MOSCOW GROUP AND PERHAPS FUTURE LEADER OF THE APK, ESTIMATED THAT AT LEAST HALF OF THE NORBOTTEN MEMBERSHIP WOULD FOLLOW THE BOARD INTO THE APK, WHICH, IF CORRECT, WOULD MEAN A 1,400-MEMBER LOSS FOR THE VPK, ALMOST 10 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL MEMBERSHIP OF 16,000. AMONG OTHER

BENEFITS WHICH WILL ACCRUE TO THE APK IS THE SERVICE OF NORRSKENSFLANMAN, THE PAPER WHICH HAS LONG BEEN THE DISSIDENT VOICE AND WHICH WILL NOW PRESUMABLY BECOME THE ORGAN OF THE APK.

3. VPK CHAIRMAN LARS WERNER DESCRIBED THE MOVE AS "REGRETTABLE" BUT NOT SURPRISING, AND MAINTAINED THAT TO THE END HE HAD ATTEMPTED TO RESUME DISCUSSIONS WITH THE BOARD THROUGH LOWENBORG, WHO, ACCORDING TO WERNER HAD STILL BEEN WILLING TO TALK. VPK LOYALISTS IN NORBOTTEN CLAIMED THEY WOULD RETAIN 60-70 PERCENT OF THE MEMBERSHIP, AND IMMEDIATELY BEGAN REORGANIZING THE DISTRICT TO SOLIDIFY WERNER'S SUPPORT.

4. THROUGHOUT THE WEEKEND VPK FIGURES ATTENDED LOCAL MEETINGS TO CONSOLIDATE THE WERNER LOYALISTS AND MINIMIZE VPK LOSSES. IN A MAJOR ADDRESS TO SOME 2,000 MEMBERS IN STOCKHOLM, WHERE THE DISTRICT BOARD REPRESENTING 4,000 MEMBERS BACKED THE VPK LEADERSHIP, WERNER'S THEME WAS THAT 'THE VPK WILL BE STRONGER AND STAND UNITED WHEN THE PARTY IS RID OF PETTY THIEVES AND COUP-MAKERS.' MORE THAN 500 MEMBERS IN GOTEBOG HEARD FORMER CHAIRMAN C.H. HERMANSSON CONDEMN THE APK AND ITS MIDWIFE, ROLF HAGEL, AND URGE A VPK OFFENSIVE. HERMANSSON SAID THE PARTY WELCOMES ALL 'HONEST COMMUNISTS' WHO CAN SUPPORT THE PARTY LINE, AND LOOKED FORWARD TO A REJUVENATED VPK AFTER 13 YEARS OF INTERNAL STRIFE, A SENTIMENT ECHOED BY VPK FIGURES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. BY MARCH 7 AT LEAST 17 OF THE 22 VPK LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DISTRICTS HAD EXPRESSED THEIR FULL SUPPORT FOR WERNER, THOUGH AN UNDETERMINED NUMBER OF SMALLER GROUPS HAVE WITHDRAWN IN FAVOR OF THE APK. END UNCLASSIFIED.

5. BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE. COMMENT: WITH THE DECISION OF THE NORBOTTEN DISTRICT TO JOIN THE APK, THE SPLIT BETWEEN THE PRO-MOSCOW GROUP AND THE VPK IS REGARDED AS DEFINITE BY MOST OBSERVERS, THOUGH IT WILL BE SOME TIME BEFORE THE FULL EXTENT OF THE APK'S SUPPORT IS APPARENT. THE EMERGING PARTY WILL BEGIN ITS FIGHT FOR THE SWEDISH WORKER WITH THE BENEFIT OF TWO RIKSDAG SEATS COOPTED FROM THE VPK (HAGEL'S AND LOWENBORG'S) AND AN ESTABLISHED NEWSPAPER TO SPREAD ITS MESSAGE, AN UNUSUALLY ADVANTAGEOUS POSITION FOR A NEW PARTY.

6. IT WOULD APPEAR AT THIS POINT THAT THE APK, IF THERE IS NO RAPPROACHEMENT WITH THE VPK BEFORE THEN, WILL GARNER SUFFICIENT SUPPORT TO IMPERIL THE VPK'S PARTICIPATION IN THE RIKSDAG ELECTED IN 1979, THOUGH NOTHING CLOSE

TO THE 30 PERCENT OF VPK MEMBERSHIP APK OPTIMISTS HAD  
HOPED FOR. THE POTENTIAL IMPACT OF THE SPLIT  
ON SWEDISH POLITICS IS GRAPHICALLY ILLUSTRATED BY THE  
LATEST PUBLIC OPINION POLL, TAKEN BEFORE THE SCHISM,  
WHICH SHOWS THE JOINT SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC/VPK BLOCK LEADING  
THE NON-SOCIALIST GOVERNMENT PARTIES BY 50 TO 48.5 PERCENT.  
THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS ALONE, HOWEVER, HAD JUST 46 PERCENT  
OF THE VOTERS, WHILE THE VPK, THEN STILL UNITED, WAS  
STRADDLING THE 4 PERCENT THRESHOLD REQUIRED FOR ADMISSION  
TO THE RIKSDAG. SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC STRATEGISTS ARE NO  
DOUBT PONDERING WITH SOME CONCERN THE EFFECT OF THE  
DAMAGE TO THE VPK ON THE PROSPECTS FOR A RETURN TO  
SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT.  
PERRY

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